

krishṇa Bhāgavat,⁵ they were men who had enfeebled their constitutions by undue intercourse with women in the lands of the outcasts, and returned home in a debilitated state. But this is not stated in the text.

It seems probable that the really important Vrātyas were those referred to as *hīna*, and that the other classes were only subsidiary. According to Rājārām,⁶ there were two categories of the first class: (a) The depressed (*hīna*), who were non-Āryan; and (b) degraded Āryans (*gara-gir*). This, however, is a mere guess, and devoid of probability. There seems to have been but one class of Vrātyas. That they were non-Āryan is not probable, for it is expressly said⁷ that, though unconsecrated, they spoke the tongue of the consecrated: they were thus apparently Āryans. This view is confirmed by the statement that 'they call what is easy of utterance, difficult to utter': probable they had already a somewhat Prakritic form of speech (*cf.* *Vāc*). The Sūtras mention their Arhants ('saints') and Yaudhas ('warriors'), corresponding to the Brahminical Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya.

Other particulars accord with the view that they were Āryans outside the sphere of Brahmin culture. Thus they are said⁸ not to practise agriculture or commerce (an allusion to a nomadic life), nor to observe the rules of **Brahmacarya**—*i.e.*, the principle regulating the Brahminic order of life. They were also allowed to become members of the Brahminical community by performance of the ritual prescribed, which would hardly be so natural in the case of non-Āryans.

Some details are given of the life and dress of the Vrātyas. Their principles were opposed to those of the Brahmins: they beat those unworthy of correction.⁹ Their leader (Gṛhapati) or householder wore a turban (**Uṣṇiṣa**), carried a whip (**Pratoda**), a kind of bow (**Jyāhṛda**), was clothed in a black (*krṣṇaśa*) garment and two skins (**Ajina**), black and white (*krṣṇa-valakṣa*), and owned a rough wagon (**Vipatha**) covered with planks

⁵ *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 19, 360.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 359.

⁷ *Pāncaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*, xvii. 1

⁸ *Ibid.*, xvii. 1, 2.

⁹ *Ibid.*, xvii. 1, 14.